

**Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
California Welcome Center Program
Title 10, Chapter 7.67, Sections 5370-5377**

Chapter 7.67. California Welcome Centers

Section 5370. Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply to the regulations contained in this chapter:

- (a) "Agency" means the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.
- (b) "California Welcome Center" means a visitor information center, designated by the State which is accessible to and recognizable by tourists and which encourages tourism in California.
- (c) "Center" means the property proposed as a California Welcome Center.
- (d) "Office" means the Office of Tourism, also known as the Division of Tourism, within the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.
- (e) "Major Holiday" means New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.

Reference: sections 13995.20, 13995.150, 13995.151, 13995.153, and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5371. Eligibility

- (a) To be eligible for designation as a California Welcome Center, an applicant shall meet the following requirements:
 - (1) The applicant shall be a convention center, visitor bureau, chamber of commerce, local government, state government, federal government, private entity or combination of the above.
 - (2) The applicant shall have a permanent structure with heating and air conditioning at the proposed property site and adequate public parking facilities, including buses and recreational vehicles.
 - (3) The property shall be within two (2) miles of a major interstate freeway or highway.
 - (4) The applicant shall have authority to permanently display the required signage on the exterior of the proposed property site. Applicant shall also have authority to display signage on local/city streets leading from the highway to the Center.

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.

Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.152, 13995.153, and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5372. Application Process.

(a) The Office shall provide a Solicitation of an open application period for a California Welcome Center to all interested persons and shall post it on the Office website. The Solicitation shall be for a designated area(s), based on the necessity for a new or replacement Center. The Solicitation shall include a description of the Application process and the Application deadline. The Application deadline shall be no earlier than thirty (30) calendar days following the mailing of the Solicitation.

(b) Not later than the deadline described in the subsection (a), each Applicant shall submit an original and four (4) copies of a completed Application to the Office.

(c) Not later than sixty (60) calendar days following the deadline described in subsection (a), the Agency shall mail to each Applicant that submitted an Application either a notice disapproving the request or a letter of conditional designation. The letter of conditional designation shall indicate that the final designation is conditioned upon execution of an agreement between the Applicant and the Agency.

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.

Reference: sections 13995.150 and 13995.151, Government Code.

Section 5373. Application. General Information.

The General Information Section of the application shall contain the following information:

(a) Applicant Information

(1) The Applicant's name, address, county, telephone and facsimile numbers, e-mail address (if applicable).

(2) Operating entity of the proposed center, i.e. Chamber of Commerce, City, County, etc.

(3) The name and title of the Applicant's Director or Manager and address and telephone and facsimile number, if different than subsection (a) (1).

(b) A non-refundable application fee of \$1,000.

(c) Proposal plans as specified in Section 5374.

Note: Authority cited: section sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.

Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.153, and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5374. Proposal Plans and Scoring Criteria.

(a) Proposal shall contain the following information and shall be scored on the criteria listed under each section.

(1) Site Plan. (0 to 20 points)

(A) The physical address of the proposed Center.

(B) Size and location of property. Include a description of the proximity to tourist attractions, restaurants and lodging and distance from major freeways or highways.

(C) Central heating and air conditioning capacity.

(D) The architectural theme of the facility and how it is representative of local surroundings.

(E) Restroom facilities and ADA compatibility.

(F) An interior display space to include the following: Lay out for information racks, service desk and rest rooms. The lay out must include plans that allow, at a minimum, eight 2' x 3' display racks, or 25' of linear wall space, or 51 square feet of open space dedicated to brochure display racks, and space for a 42 " plasma screen.

(G) Direct Internet access, preferably with speed of 128kb or better, for visitor use.

(H) Parking facilities, including RV and bus parking.

(2) Marketing Plan. (0 to 20 points) The marketing plan shall include the following:

(A) Public Relations.

1. Describe any public relations efforts that will promote the proposed center.

(B) Direct Sales

1. A list of any merchandise to be sold at the center, the benefit the merchandise has to the traveler and the competitive pricing of the merchandise with other local vendors.

2. A list of any and all commercial establishments attached to the proposed property and the level of service it will provide to the traveler.

3. A list of any travel services provided at the center, including travel arrangements, ticket booking service and internet service.

4. A commitment that the California Welcome Center shall not provide any real estate or time-shares sales, telemarketing.

5. Describe any other plans to promote the center through direct sales.

(C) Print Advertising

1. Describe any plans to promote the Center through print advertising.

(3) Financial Plan. (0 to 20 points) The financial plan shall describe or include the following:

(A) Funding sources and financial ability to meet hours of operation, on-going marketing activities and payment of the annual \$5,000 fee.

(4) Operational Plan. (0 to 30 points) The operational plan shall include the following:

(A) Description of proposed staffing which shall include a manager with decision-making authority. Include number of full-time and part-time staff, and indicate paid or volunteer. Describe proposed uniforms or name tags that will distinguish the staff from the visitors.

(B) Commitment to operate seven days a week, except for major holidays.

(C) Describe in detail plan to gather, display and maintain visitor brochures and travel-related information from throughout the State.

(D) Building Maintenance. Provide plans for maintaining the building, restrooms and grounds surrounding the center.

(E) Proof of insurance on the proposed property.

(F) Office Equipment.

(G) Operating hours and how they meet the needs of travelers in that area.

(H) Training Plans for Staff.

(I) Authorization by the property owner that the applicant can display signage for a California Welcome Center on the exterior of the proposed property and evidence that signage will be in compliance with any relevant city or county ordinances or applicable conditions, covenants and restrictions.

(J) Provide the method used for tracking the number of visitors to the Center.

(K) Description of visitor traffic pattern and determination of whether a center is warranted in said area. If another California Welcome Center is located within 50 miles of the proposed location, description of how the visitor traffic patterns will support both centers.

(5) Local or Community Support (0 to 10 points)

(A) A letter from at least two of the following: the community's principal destination marketing organization, tourism association, city or county, supporting the establishment of a California Welcome Center in the area.

(b) Eligible Proposals receiving between eighty-five (85) and one hundred (100) points shall be considered for designation and a site visitation shall be scheduled.

(c) Site visitation. **(0-20 Points)** A site visitation of the proposed Center will be conducted to verify the site and operational plan.

(d) The Agency shall award the designation to the Applicant(s) receiving the highest score.

(e) The designation shall be for a five-year period. At the end of the five years, the Center shall submit in writing a letter of intent to continue operation of the Center and the Office shall re-evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of continuing a Center designation at the same location.

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.

Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.152, 13995.153, and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5375. Continuing Responsibility of CWC

(a) Upon designation as a California Welcome Center, the Center shall be required to comply with the following:

(1) An annual maintenance fee of \$5,000 shall be paid to the Office on a fiscal year basis. This payment shall be due either in a lump sum of \$5,000 due July 1, or quarterly payments of 1,250 each due July 1, October 1, January 1 and April 1.

(2) The Center shall pay for all fees associated with required signage, including permits, construction and placement of signs.

(3) The Center shall request approval from the Office in order to use the Traveling Bear logo, the "California Welcome Center" or the Find Yourself Here logo on any merchandise, uniforms or signage. The Center shall submit the request to the Office.

(4) All merchandise sold in the Center shall be appropriate for all ages of travelers.

(5) The Center shall provide on-going training to their personnel.

- (6) The Center shall display all local (city and county in which the center is located), state and federal governmental tourism information at no cost to the governmental agency. The Center may charge other organizations for the costs of displaying and providing visitor information, including graphic displays and brochures.
- (7) The operating entities of each center shall promote the California Tourism Website (www.visitcalifornia.com) and the California Welcome Center Website (www.visitcwc.com) in advertising, in promotional activities, in related collateral, on the physical premises, and on their website.
- (8) The Center's manager or a designated representative with decision-making authority shall attend a minimum of three manager's meetings each year. The Office shall establish the meeting dates and places.
- (9) The Center shall be required to pass periodic site inspections by Office staff. The site inspections shall not occur more frequently than once a year. The site inspection will verify that the Center is continually meeting the site specifications in the original proposal.

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.
Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.152, 13995.153, and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5376. Revocation of Designation

- (a) Failure to comply with the provisions in Section 5375, shall be cause for revocation of the California Welcome Center's designation.
- (1) The Office shall provide written notice to a California Welcome Center that fails to comply with one or more the requirements in Section 5375. The notice shall describe the deficiencies and shall include a deadline for correction of the deficiencies.
- (2) If the California Welcome Center fails to correct the deficiencies as required in subsection (a)(1), the designation shall be revoked. The revocation shall be effective 30 days after the deadline specified in subsection (a)(1).

Note: Authority cited: sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.
Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.152, 13995.153 and 13995.154, Government Code.

Section 5377. Appeal Process

- (a) Appeal of the revocation shall be in writing and shall include the following:
- (1) Name and address of California Welcome Center making the appeal.
- (2) Statement of the basis of the appeal.
- (3) Documentation which supports the position of the California Welcome Center, submitted under the penalty of perjury.

(b) An appeal by a California Welcome Center shall be served on the Office within 30 days of the effective date of the revocation.

(c) The Office shall respond in writing to the appeal by the California Welcome Center within 30 days.

(d) The California Welcome Center can appeal the Office's decision to the Agency Secretary by submitting a copy of the original complaint and the Office's written decision within 30 days of the date of the Office's decision.

(e) The Secretary shall respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of the California Welcome Center's appeal and submission.

Note: Authority cited: section sections 13995.151 and 13995.155, Government Code.
Reference: sections 13995.150, 13995.151, 13995.152, 13995.153, and 13995.154,
Government Code.